

PASTORAL LETTER

—OF THE—

Right Reverend John Walsh, D.D.,

BISHOP OF SANDWICH.

PUBLISHING

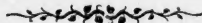
The Pope's Encyclical Letter

OF THE 17TH OF OCTOBER, 1867, AND

APPOINTING A TRIUM

IN

COMPLIANCE WITH ITS CONDITIONS.



1868.



PASTORAL LETTER
OF THE
Right Reverend John Walsh, D.D.,
BISHOP OF SANDWICH,
PUBLISHING THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF 17TH OCTOBER, 1867, AND APPOINTING
A TRIDUUM IN COMPLIANCE WITH ITS DIRECTIONS.

**John, by the Grace of God and Appointment of the Holy See,
Bishop of Sandwich.**

*To the Clergy, Religious Communities, and Laity of our Diocese, Health and
Benediction in the Lord.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

Once more the voice of the Holy Father resounds through the Christian world, protesting against sacrilegious violence and injustice, and calling attention to the evils that overspread the face of Italy, and that have swept in a devastating tide over unhappy Poland. In an Encyclical Letter, addressed some time since to the universal Church, the Supreme Pontiff bewails these evils in accents akin to those in which our dear Redeemer mourned over the doomed city of Jerusalem. Many a time, during his eventful but glorious Pontificate, has Pius IX. had cause to denounce wickedness, to condemn error, to draw the dividing line between truth and falsehood, and with unfaltering voice, to point out to an erring world, the road which leads to virtue and happiness. Like unto his Divine Master, he has been the object of ingratitude, treachery and hatred; he has been maligned and persecuted,—a living fulfilment of the words addressed

by our Lord to His Apostles, "The servant is not greater than his master; if they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." (St. John xv. 20.) Our Divine Redeemer came eating and drinking, and yet He pleased not,—our Holy Father instituted reforms, and he was repaid by treason and revolution. During his long reign, he has striven to make his people happy, and nevertheless, he is reviled and calumniated. Amid all his undeserved sufferings, the fiery trials to which he has been subjected; the bitter persecution and obloquy of which he has been the target, at the hands of the base and depraved, he presents a sublime spectacle to the world,—the noblest example which the age has afforded of the triumph of moral strength over brute force, of truth and virtue over falsehood and iniquity. And why all this hatred and calumny, and injustice which assail the Sovereign Pontiff? It is an old story: the continuation of the enmity placed by God between the seed of the woman and that of the serpent, the uninterrupted warfare between good and evil, that has raged in the world since the fall. The Holy Father is the visible Head of the Christian religion, and the enemies of Jesus and of His blessed work on earth hate him on that account, and would destroy him if they could. The Papacy is the foundation of the everlasting Church, the centre of its unity and fountain of jurisdiction, and they see at a glance that by destroying the Papacy, they would thereby destroy the Religion they detest. It is the old cry of the Deicides: "Away with Him, away with Him," "we will have no king but Cæsar." The Papacy is also the guardian of order; the bulwark of society and of thrones, and the revolution aims at the destruction of these through the downfall of the Papacy. Of course, the enemies of religion and of society mask their satanic designs under the flimsy veil of pretence. They would, they allege, respect religion; and would not lift a profane hand against the sacred ark of the Christian Church. They would surround the august Head of the Church with all the veneration and pomp due to his exalted dignity, but they would deprive him of his temporal power in order to leave him free to attend exclusively to the interests of religion, and would establish "a free Church in a free State."

In order to understand the absurdities of these pretences, the shallow sophistry of these vapid declamations, the glaring injustice and wickedness of this self-imposed mission of the revolutionists, it may be useful to go to the root of the Roman question, and glance briefly at the tremendous issues it involves.

We shall begin by stating that the Primacy of St. Peter and his lawful successors over the Christian Church is an article of faith and a fundamental doctrine of Catholicism. What the sun is to the solar system, that the Primacy of the Apostolic See is to the Catholic system of belief. The Church is a kingdom, it must have a chief ruler; it is a visible body, it must have a visible head; it is a house, it must have a head of the family; it is a sheep-fold, it must have a supreme shepherd. Our Blessed Lord promised Peter the headship of the Church, when He said, "I say unto

thee thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. And to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," etc., etc (Matt. xvi. 15-20.) Peter, then, is the rock on which the everlasting Church is built, the corner stone of the solid foundation on which that majestic structure so securely repose. All Christian antiquity maintains that in the words above quoted, our Divine Redeemer promised the primacy of Peter and of his office, and it no less unanimously teaches that this promise was fulfilled when our Saviour gave to Peter the commission to feed the lambs and sheep of His flock: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep," (John xxi. 16-17,) that is, according to the interpretation of the Fathers, the whole flock of Christ:—bishops, priests, as well as the simple faithful. It is not our purpose here to argue and contend for a doctrine, but simply to state an article of faith professed by over two hundred millions of the human race, and held as a fundamental doctrine by the living Church in all ages down from the time of its institution by Christ. From the very first, we find acknowledged the supreme power of St. Peter and of his successors in spirituals over the universal Church. The writings of the early Fathers and the decisions of the first General Councils leave no doubt on this point. Thus, according to the Fathers, Peter is the "solid rock,—the great foundation,—to him the keys of the kingdom were granted,—to him the sheep were assigned, and he is the universal shepherd. He is the pillar of the Church—the eye of the Apostles—the mouth of the Apostles—the head of the Apostles—the prince of the Apostles—the one who has the primacy of the Apostleship, 'and primacy over the universal Church.'" The Fathers also call the Roman Church the "matrix of all the churches;" "it is the head See—it is possessed of a superior principality—it is the head of the churches—the Apostolic See—the fountain, and other churches are the streams." To it all must have recourse. "He is profane—an alien—an antichrist who is separated from Rome." And of the Pontiff who occupies the See of Peter, they say, "This is the fisherman's successor—he holds the place of Peter—he has the charge of all—he has the primacy in all things—the chief Pontiff—the bishop of bishops—the primate of all the bishops," etc., etc., etc.

Such, Dearly Beloved Brethren, is the teaching of all Christian antiquity, in fact, the teaching at all times, of the universal Church, in regard to the primacy of St. Peter and of his successors; and impartial history is there to attest that this doctrine has not remained a mere abstract truth, but that it has always been put into practice.

But let us see what does this primacy imply. It implies, on the part of the Pope, a universal jurisdiction over the entire Church, over all the children of Christ, the right of convoking General Councils and of appointing bishops, the duty of feeding with salutary doctrine the lambs and sheep of the fold of which he is the supreme shepherd; it implies, therefore, the right of free access to the whole Church, the right of controlling and direct-

ing the children of the Church, and its subordinate rulers in whatever clime, in whatever nation, under whatever form of government they may live. It implies, also, on the part of the bishops of the Church, the paramount duty of being in strict communion with the See of Peter. The intercommunion of the Apostolic See and of all the bishops of the Church, should be uninterrupted and untrammelled, like the flowing and ebbing of the tide. Who does not see, therefore, that the doctrine of the primacy involves as a corollary the divine right of freedom of communication between the Head of the Church and its members, the right of the supreme Pontiff of being free and independent of any human power in the discharge of the sublime duties of his office. Such a freedom is an essential element of Church government and discipline, and the Church is in its normal state only when it enjoys it.

Now, as a security and guarantee of this freedom of action on the part of the Sovereign Pontiff, He who established the primacy so disposed of events as to prepare the way for the temporal power of the Popes. He who reads history aright, must see the finger of God in the gradual establishment and consolidation of the temporal power, as the condition of the freedom and independence of the Head of the Church in the discharge of his sacred duties. Daniel saw in his vision of the night the whole divine plan, according to which empire was to give the way to empire, and kingdom was to succeed kingdom, until the whole world should be gathered into the Roman empire: "When in the days of those kingdoms, the God of heaven would raise up another kingdom which should never be destroyed, but which should stand for ever." (Dan. ii. 44.) Even so, the Christian student of history may see how the Almighty Disposer of events, who upholds all things by the word of His power, so disposed of events and controlled the destinies of nations as to prepare the way for the establishment of a principality which was to secure the free, unfettered exercise of that primacy which the Incarnate God had established in His Church, as the centre and principle of unity of faith and the fountain of jurisdiction. During three hundred years, the Church was subjected to a most sanguinary persecution; her faithful children were slain by hundreds, and the soil of Rome was soddened with martyrs' blood. During that dark period, the Church, it is true, acquired property, but not, of course, a civil principality; and hence, the only way in which the Supreme Pontiffs could vindicate their liberty and independence was to retire to the gloom of the catacombs, or to shed their blood on the red scaffold of martyrdom. But that was not the normal state of the Christian Church. Persecution had done its worst against it and utterly failed in its object. Human passions broke in angry waves against the rock of ages, but in vain. The Church was built upon a rock, and though the rain fell, and the floods came, and the tempests raged, it fell not. The victory of Constantine gave freedom to our holy religion, called her forth from her hiding places, and enthroned her in glorious basilicas and majestic temples. Then began to manifest itself the action of Divine Providence in

preparing the way for the establishment of the temporal power. Constantine, after giving freedom and protection to the Church, transfers the seat of empire from Rome to the banks of the Bosphorus. "The same precincts," observes Count de Maistre, "could not contain the emperor and the Pontiff. Constantine yielded up Rome to the Pope. From that time we also observe that the emperors seem no longer at home in Rome: they resemble strangers passing through and lodging there from time to time." At length, the period had arrived for the destruction of the Roman empire and its guilty capital—Pagan Rome, the Babylon of the Apocalypse. A cry had gone up against it from the Christian martyrs, and was heard; the hour of its doom had struck. The barbarians, bursting from their northern climes and savage forests, swept over the empire with the might and impetuosity of an irresistible inundation. The Roman legions were annihilated; the empire itself, the consolidation of centuries, was broken into fragments by many a hard stroke: *tusione plurima*. Rome's haughty gates were torn down and carried away, and the city itself reduced to a "marble wilderness." But there was in that city a principle of vitality—the Papacy; and Christian Rome, blessed with the Gospel of immortality, arose on the ruins of Pagan Rome, and becomes the capital of "a kingdom which can never be destroyed." The feeble emperors of Constantinople were impotent to protect their subjects, and the abandoned peoples of Rome and the adjoining countries turned to the Pope for protection, and elected him their sovereign. The Supreme Magistracy was spontaneously transferred by the Roman Senate and people to the Sovereign Pontiff, Gregory II., A. D. 730. "The bishops of Rome then became, *de facto et de jure*, the temporal as well as the spiritual fathers of a free people, and after the loss of her legions and provinces, Rome was again restored to honor and dominion. The Chair of Peter replaced the throne of the Cæsars; the seat of empire became the sanctuary of religion; and had it not been for this new vital principle, which renovated her decayed energies, Rome, like other cities of antiquity, like Thebes, or Babylon, or Carthage, might have been blotted from the map of the earth, verifying the awful foreboding of Lucan, '*Fabula nomen exit*.'" (O'Donovan's Rome, Ancient and Modern, p. 68.) "The temporal power of the Popes," says Gibbon, "is now confirmed by the reverence of a thousand years, and their noblest title is the free choice of a people whom they had redeemed from slavery." This necessarily rapid and imperfect sketch of the way in which the temporal power of the Papacy was brought into existence, is sufficient to convince the impartial reader that this power is the work of Providence: "*Digitus Dei est hic*." And with this work the liberty of conscience and the independence of the Church have been providentially united for centuries. In the words of the illustrious Bishop of Orleans, "it is necessary to the spiritual security of the Church and to our own, that the Pope be free and independent, that this independence must be sovereign, that the Pope be free and that he appear free." And the Pope has time and again asserted that his temporal sovereignty is, in the present

state of society, necessary to his independence and his freedom of action as Head of the universal Church; and this, the greatest statesmen and even enemies of the Holy See have admitted. Frederick II. of Prussia put the case as strongly as words would allow, in a letter to Voltaire: "The easy conquest of the Papal States," he says, "may be looked forward to. This done, the Pallium is ours, and the Papacy is over. For no potentate in Europe *would be willing to acknowledge the subject of another power as the Vicar of Christ*. All will then, each for his own States, set up a Patriarch; by and by, each ruler will break from the unity of the Church, and we shall then have in each kingdom a *native religion* as well as a native tongue." You see, Dearly Beloved Brethren, what vital interests are bound up with the Roman question, and how deeply it affects the happiness and spiritual welfare of every Catholic. The primacy of the Pope is a divine institution; the temporal sovereignty of the Papacy is the guarantee and condition of the free exercise of its duties; this sovereignty is a providential work, "consecrated by the reverence of more than a thousand years," and every Catholic upon earth is deeply interested in having it respected and secured.

But the revolutionists insist in despoiling the Holy Father of his civil sovereignty, and of thereby robbing the Catholic world of its security and spiritual freedom, which are inseparately united with the independence of the Head of the Church, and they seek to justify their wicked designs by the following reasons: [a] Rome belongs to Italy; [4] the Romans no longer want the Pontiff King, and are misgoverned, etc., etc. Now, Rome never belonged to Italy. It was the capital of an empire of which Italy formed a part, but it never belonged to Italy; but, on the contrary, Italy belonged to it; for those who founded Rome conquered Italy, and afterwards the discovered earth. The monuments of Pagan Rome were built at the expense of a conquered world, and its Christian monuments have been built at the expense of a *believing world*. Rome belongs not to Italy. But the Romans are not satisfied with their government, and do not want the Pope as their temporal ruler. Does it follow from this that the Pope should be dethroned? Do the Governments of Europe act upon the political doctrine that they must abdicate their functions, when their subjects become discontented? Does England act upon this doctrine in regard to Ireland? Russia, in the case of Poland? Turkey, in that of Candia? But the late piratical raid of the revolutionists on Roman territory has proved to a demonstration that the Romans are eminently loyal, and that they heartily detest the revolution, and have no love for, no sympathy with, the red-shirted runaway of Mentana. History records not, in her darkest pages, a more wicked, more unjust proceeding than the late invasion of the Roman territory by a band of land-pirates, backed by the Government of a royal robber. But in the brilliant history of France, there is not a brighter page, than that which records the late French intervention in Italian affairs, and the motives which prompted it.

After all, Providence does not easily allow its work to be undone: "*Fata viam pandent.*" Divine Providence will work itself a way through all the intricacies of State craft, and through all hostile combinations; and across the passage of the execution of its decrees, adverse treaties and conventions will lie in scattered scraps, *tanquam folia quæ a vento capiuntur*, evidences at once of the folly and short-sightedness of man, and of the irresistible power and all-seeing wisdom of God. An old Roman legend hath it, that "while the Coliseum stands, Rome shall stand; and when the Coliseum falls, Rome shall fall; and when Rome falls, the world." With far greater truth it might be said, that were the temporal power of the Papacy swept away by the tide of revolution, then Rome would fall, with a thundering crash, from its high eminence in the world; the moral order would be grievously disturbed, for divine and human laws would be grievously violated. The sacred rights of conscience would be trampled in the dust; the Christian world would be thrown into confusion; and the light, that shone far and wide for ages, a beacon of hope to the weak and oppressed of humanity, would disappear from unworthy Italy. True, the Papacy must stand until the consummation of the world. As the sun, whether rising or setting, or in its meridian splendor, is still the sun; so the Pope, whether in Rome or in some islet of the sea, or an exile and stranger in some distant land, would still be the Pope, Christ's vicegerent on earth; and from him would still radiate the light of truth over the Church. But the Catholic world will never allow the Father of the Faithful to be an exile or homeless wanderer, or yet, the subject of any earthly sovereign; and in spite of the revolution, it will, please God, ever preserve to him the position which the providence of God, the choice of a free people, and the piety and veneration of ages have assigned him. No! Rome shall never fall; it shall ever remain the *civitas Dei*, the city of the soul, the Sion of the new dispensation, the sacred country of Christian millions, towards which, not only "the orphans of the heart," but all the children of the Church, will turn with hope and affection, will turn for safe guidance through the journey of time, and from which will ever flow the bright streams of saving doctrines for the healing of the nations, like those waters of life, which Ezechiel saw in prophetic vision issuing from under the holy temple. [Ezechiel chap. xlvii.]

But the merciful designs of Divine Providence may depend for their fulfilment upon the prayers and worthy dispositions of those for whose benefit they are intended. Had the Ninivites turned a deaf ear to the preaching of Jonas, their city would have been destroyed. Had Jerusalem known "the day of her visitation," its enemies would not have cast a trench about it and compassed it round, and straitened it on every side, and beat it flat to the ground. And so it is our duty to pray that God may still protect the Head of the Church and his civil sovereignty against the attacks of the enemies of both. Prayer is all-powerful with God; "if we ask the Father anything in the name of Jesus, it will be given us." It was prayer that

saved the people of God in the desert, that often gave victory to the arms of Israel over their enemies. It was the prayers of the faithful that opened for St. Peter the prison gates and set him free; and hence, the Holy Father, in his late Encyclical, calls upon us in the most feeling terms to pray for him and the Holy Church: he says,—

“Amidst so many calamities and afflictions to which we and the Church are subjected, as there is none other to combat for us but the Lord our God, we earnestly, again and again, entreat you, venerable brethren, to unite, in your devotedness and ardent affection for the Catholic cause, your most fervent prayers with ours; and, together with your clergy and faithful people, to offer your supplications to God, praying Him to be mindful of His eternal mercies, to avert His anger from us, to liberate His holy Church and us from so many evils, to assist and defend by His all powerful arm, the children of the same Church, most dear to us, who in a most every country, but particularly in Italy and in the Russian empire, and in the kingdom of Poland, are beset by so many snares and subjected to so many afflictions; to preserve, and confirm, and strengthen them every day more and more in the profession of the Catholic faith and its saving doctrines; to dissipate the impious designs of wicked men, and to withdraw our enemies from the abyss of iniquity unto the path of salvation, and unto the observance of His commandments. Wherefore, we desire that, within six months, or in foreign parts within a year, a public triduum shall be celebrated in your dioceses; and that the faithful may the more eagerly frequent and take part in these public prayers, we benignly grant a plenary indulgence to all the faithful who assist at such prayers on the aforesaid three days, praying God according to our intention for the present necessities of the Church, and approaching the holy sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. Moreover, to such faithful as, with contrition of heart, perform the prescribed works on one of the above days, we relax, in the usual form of the Church, seven years and as many ‘quadragesimæ’ of penances enjoined on them or otherwise due for their sins. All which indulgences may be offered in suffrage for the souls of the faithful who departed this life in the friendship of their Creator.”

Wherefore, to carry out the desires of the Holy Father, and in conformity with his wishes, we ordain as follows:

1st. The *Triduum*, or three days’ prayer, shall be celebrated in each of the churches and religious communities of this diocese, between the second Sunday of February, and the 17th of next October.

2nd. The devotions of the *Triduum* shall consist of the Litany of Loretto, the Litany of the Saints, and the Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament; which devotions will take place immediately after last Mass in those Churches to which the faithful could not conveniently come in the evening.

3rd. The Holy Mass will be offered up on each day of the *Triduum*, at the same hour as that on which the Pastors are wont to offer it up on Sunday. On these days, the Collect *contra persecutores et male agentes* will be added to the other prayers prescribed in the Mass. On each day the respective pastors shall take care that suitable instructions be given to their people, and every opportunity afforded them of approaching the Sacraments.

4th. The clergy of conterminous missions will agree amongst themselves as to the time in which the *Triduum* will be celebrated in their respective missions, in order that they may assist one another in preaching, and in the administration of the Sacraments.

5th. This Pastoral shall be read on the first Sunday after its reception, in all the churches of the diocese, and in chapter in religious communities.

We earnestly exhort you, Dearly Beloved Brethren, to profit by the devotions of the *Triduum*, and we pray God to have you in His holy keeping.

Given at our Episcopal Residence, London, on the Feast of St. Ignatius, Bp. & M., the first day of February, A. D. 1868, under Our Hand and Seal, and the counter signature of Our Secretary.

† JOHN, *Bp of Sandwich.*



By order of His Lordship,

F. O. J. OUELLET, Priest, *Secretary.*